



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

OPNAVINST 5750.12G

N09B

29 March 1999

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 5750.12G

From: Chief of Naval Operations  
To: All Ships and Stations (less Marine Corps field  
addressees not having Navy personnel attached)  
  
Subj: COMMAND HISTORIES  
  
Encl: (1) Guide for Preparation of Command Histories of  
Operating Forces (as listed in SNDL Part 1)  
(2) Guide for Preparation of Command Histories of Shore  
Activities (as listed in SNDL Part 2)

1. Purpose. To ensure the compilation and preservation of significant information concerning the activities of naval commands. This instruction has been completely revised and should be read in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 5750.12F.

3. Background

a. Command histories are the only overall accounts of command's activities and achievements normally preserved for future use. They are maintained in the Navy's permanent records, indexed, and made accessible to authorized users. The documents are used by staff officers of the Department of the Navy who need information on past events, by official study groups, by authorities responsible for verifying unit awards or individual sea pay claims, and by originating commands seeking background information on their units. Numerous questions from other government officials, Congress, former naval personnel, and members of the general public are answered from the command histories within the limits of security and policy restrictions. The documents serve as the eventual basis for published naval histories. Command histories are centrally housed along with Deck Logs and the document collections of the Navy at the Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC.

b. Command histories are intended to provide the raw materials upon which a reliable future analysis or history of unit operations can be based. The action officer selected to prepare the command history should have direct access to the

29 MAR 1998

commanding officer, as the document should reflect the commander's views and analysis of events and insights behind his or her decisions. Command histories are not expected to be works of literary art, but they do need to contain sufficient substance and data on which a competent history can be based. They must be written in clear and concise English with a minimum of abbreviations or technical jargon.

c. Do not include Privacy Act information such as social security numbers, home addresses, and home telephone numbers.

#### 4. Action

a. All commands and activities listed in the Standard Navy Distribution List (SNDL) are required to submit an annual command history. The documents shall be sent to the Director, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, 805 Kidder Breese SE, Washington, DC 20374-5060.

b. In addition to a paper copy of the report with a signature on the cover letter, the report should also be submitted on a 3 1/2" disk in a format using ASCII/MS DOS text. It is also acceptable in MS Word, but only as an addition file. The disk label should include the name of command or activity, history report year, file name(s), and an appropriate security classification sticker. The required information for submission on a 3 1/2" disk should include the cover letter, command composition and organization, the chronology, and the narrative. Enclosures or supporting documents do not have to be placed on the 3 1/2" disk, unless the information is already in computer language. The paper copy of the report should indicate the disk as an enclosure.

c. The content of histories submitted by Operating Forces (as listed in Part 1 of the SNDL) is specified in enclosure (1). Enclosure (2) provides similar guidance for Shore Activities (SNDL Part 2).

d. If comprehensive reports of operations or activities are compiled to meet other reporting requirements, they should be submitted with the command history. That will eliminate the need to write an extensive narrative and will avoid duplication of previously compiled reports.

29 MAR 1999

e. Command histories cover the events of a single calendar year and shall be submitted by 1 March of the following year, except as provided for in the following paragraph.

f. When commands are required by other authority to submit reports on a fiscal year basis, and those documents are sufficiently comprehensive to serve as the basic command history, fiscal year submission is authorized. In those cases, the deadline for submission is 1 December of the following fiscal year.

g. Since the purpose of the histories is to present a reliable account of the primary activities of a command, many command histories will include classified information or a classified supplement. Normally, the classified information of the history supplement will not be higher than SECRET. TOP SECRET supplements should be submitted separately as appropriate. In cases where intelligence sections, activities, and commands have material of historical value bearing a security classification or sensitivity inappropriate for forwarding with the annual command history, the material may be sent as a separate enclosure or annex via secure channels to the Director, Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) (ONI-55), 4251 Suitland Road, Washington, DC 20395. The title of the sensitive material should be omitted but show its distribution to ONI only.

h. Commands scheduled for decommissioning or disestablishment shall ensure that a history is submitted covering events from the start of the year through the date of decommissioning or disestablishment.

i. Questions concerning the drafting or submission of the command history may be directed to the following NAVHISTCEN offices:

Ships: Ships' Histories Branch  
(DSN) 288-3643, (Commercial) (202) 433-3643  
(E-mail) [shistory@nhc.navy.mil](mailto:shistory@nhc.navy.mil)

Aviation Commands: Aviation History Branch  
(DSN) 288-4355, (Commercial) (202) 433-4355  
(E-mail) [ahistory@nhc.navy.mil](mailto:ahistory@nhc.navy.mil)

OPNAVINST 5750.12G

29 MAR 1988

All other Operating Forces and Shore Activities:  
Operational Archives Branch  
(DSN) 288-3224, (Commercial) (202) 433-3224  
(E-mail) chistory@nhc.navy.mil

j. The Naval Historical Center's Home Page is  
<http://www.history.navy.mil>. The command history instruction is  
available at this web site.

5. Report. OPNAV 5750-1 has been assigned to the reporting  
requirement contained in paragraph 4 and is approved for 3 years  
from the date of this instruction.



A. N. LANGSTON  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Director, Navy Staff

Distribution:  
SNDL Parts 1 and 2

GUIDE FOR PREPARATION OF COMMAND HISTORIES BY  
OPERATING FORCES (AS LISTED IN SNDL PART 1)

Command histories will consist of four parts, as listed below:

1. Command Composition and Organization. Include command short title and Unit Identification Code (UIC) as both appear in the SNDL Part 1 (OPNAVNOTE 5400); mission; organizational structure (immediate senior command; units under your operational/administrative control); name of commander; permanent duty station; type and number of aircraft assigned (if any), with tailcode.

2. Chronology. A complete and accurate chronology is essential to every command history. The short entries listing significant events should include dates of movements; deployments; exercises and operations; change of command; major changes to organization, name, mission or functions; new weapon systems or major equipment; major physical alterations; logistic support (or other significant support provided to the fleet); major command awards; major command problems; unit/detachments embarked or disembarked with dates (for ships); major conferences; ship/stations/area to which deployed, with dates (for other commands); changes in operational command; and major accidents involving loss of life or equipment. Specifically cite all underway periods or periods away from homeport, regardless of length, as well as homeport changes.

3. Narrative. The narrative should describe and explain the events listed in the chronology. What were the objectives and results of exercises and operations engaged in by the command; what lessons were learned? What was the commander's evaluation of them? Describe and explain the reasons for major changes in organization. How did equipment and weapon systems perform?

4. Supporting Documents. These are copies of documents already compiled by your command which provide important information on your activities. DO NOT ASSUME THAT BECAUSE SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO WASHINGTON THEY ARE READILY AVAILABLE OR WILL BE PRESERVED. Include all significant documents regardless of whether they have previously been sent to other commands or individuals.

28 MAR 1999

5. Types of documents of particular interest include:
- a. "Personal-For" Messages.
  - b. Periodic or Situational Reports.
  - c. Cruise/Deployment Reports.
  - d. Intelligence Reports.
  - e. Major Staff, command Studies or Briefings (including technical/scientific reports).
  - f. Action/Combat Reports.
  - g. Major Exercise Reports.
  - h. Published documents (Welcome Aboard/Alongside, cruise books, news releases, staff or crew orientation pamphlets, etc.).
  - i. Reports on performance of weapons systems, major projects or material.
  - j. Hazardous Waste Reports (storage, disposal, spillage).
  - k. Unusual or unique events such as new records set (e.g., longest submerged voyage, most 5-inch rounds fired in one day, etc.).
  - l. Photographs of ship/aircraft/base (particularly when major change has occurred).
  - m. Biography and photograph of commanding officer.
  - n. Copy of letter, notice, instruction, or message authorizing the disestablishment, or redesignation of the command which includes effective date of change.

Enclosure (1)

29 MAR 1999

GUIDE FOR PREPARATION OF COMMAND HISTORIES BY  
SHORE ACTIVITIES (AS LISTED IN SNDL PART 2)

Each command history will include three parts, as listed below:

1. Basic Historical Narrative describing your command's mission, organization, and how your mission was implemented during the last year. Include the following sections:

a. Statement of command's mission.

b. Description of command's organization; command short title and Unit Identification Code (UIC) as both appear in the SNDL Part 2 (OPNAVNOTE 5400); names of the commanding officer, department heads, and other senior staff members; and identification of your immediate superior command.

c. Description of mission accomplishment during the last year. This is the major part of the narrative and should describe those events, developments, and operations that relate to the primary work of an activity. (Supporting or staff work may be covered in the history's Special Topics section). The material can be presented in chronological order. Large commands, however, may wish to organize the narrative by department, or on a functional subject basis. Research and development, or test and evaluation activities will find it useful to describe what happened during the year with major projects, including their initiation, important milestones reached, achievement of operational status, or other conclusions.

2. Special Topics as applicable to a command (do not repeat information in the historical narrative or in documentary annexes):

a. Statistics on major functions, such as volume of logistic support, maintenance work, training, or recruiting.

b. Number of military and civilian personnel on board.

c. Major command problems faced during the year.

d. Major facility developments, including new construction and base right agreements.

Enclosure (2)

20 MAR 1989

- e. Major accidents or casualties.
- f. Storage or disposal of hazardous waste.
- g. Community relations, including disaster relief.
- h. Records set or other unique and unusual events.
- i. List and types of aircraft assigned that are not in a squadron.

3. Supporting Documents. These are copies of documents already prepared by your command. They are easy to assemble and are a valuable part of the history. It is not necessary to repeat the basic information in the documents elsewhere in the history. Examples of documents to include are:

- a. Annual, operational, administrative, technical, or scientific reports, prepared to meet other requirements, that give an overview of the command's mission accomplishment.
- b. Biography and photograph of commander or commanding officer.
- c. Staff directory and organization chart. Do not include social security numbers, home addresses, or other personal information protected under the Privacy Act of 1974.
- d. Reports of major conferences.
- e. Major awards and citations given to the command.
- f. Booklets used for public or staff orientations.
- g. Copy of letter, notice, instruction, or message authorizing the disestablishment, establishment, or redesignation of the command which includes effective date of change.

Enclosure (2)